



UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM
Legislative Testimony

Testimony Presented Before the
House Committee on Higher Education
March 24, 2009 at 2:15 pm

By

John Morton

Vice President for Community Colleges, University of Hawaii
and

David Lassner

Vice President for Information Technology/CIO, University of Hawaii

SB 713, SD 2 – MAKING AN APPROPRIATION FOR THE EMERGENCY ENVIRONMENTAL WORKFORCE

Chair Chang, Vice Chair Nakashima and Members of the Committee:

The University of Hawaii is supportive of the intent of this Bill to provide "green collar" training and employment opportunities for individuals who have lost their jobs as a result of current economic conditions. And we understand that the Research Corporation of the University of Hawaii (RCUH) is willing to undertake the program as modified by the testimony they will be submitting directly.

The University of Hawaii requests one very important change in any measure that moves forward to implement the program.

Section 3, Paragraph (5) calls for attorneys employed or retained by the University of Hawaii to provide legal support for this program. The University of Hawaii does not provide legal support to the RCUH, which is a separate organization represented by the Office of the Attorney General. So we respectfully request that this paragraph be stricken in its entirety.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on this measure.

The Research Corporation of the University of Hawaii

Human Resources Department

March 21, 2009
DP032101.NS6

Testimony of the Research Corporation of the University of Hawaii
Supporting S. B. 713, SD2
MAKING AN APPROPRIATION FOR THE EMERGENCY ENVIRONMENTAL WORKFORCE
Before the House Committee on Higher Education
Conference Room 309
March 24, 2009

Committee Chair Jerry Chang and Vice Chair Mark Nakashima and Committee Members:

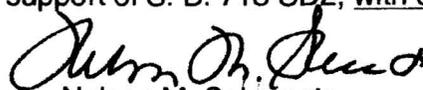
The Research Corporation of the University of Hawaii (RCUH) supports the intent of S. B. 713 SD2 with our recommended changes.

Act 004 of the Third Session of the 2001 Hawaii State Legislature established the Emergency Environmental Workforce (EEWF). The Act provided funding for the RCUH to employ Hawaii residents economically displaced by the aftermath of the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks. The RCUH in collaboration with the Pacific Cooperative Studies Unit (PCSU) of the University of Hawaii, numerous private organizations, and government agencies (federal, state, and county) employed 225 individuals. These RCUH employees augmented existing programs combating the State's serious environmental problems relating to invasive species. The RCUH is prepared to do the same job for the State to employ Hawaii residents economically displaced by our current economic crisis.

The RCUH supports S. B. 713 SD2 with the following changes:

1. Section 2.(1) & (2) – Delete the words “three month contract”. These are not “contract” employees. Replace with “RCUH” employees. A three-month period is too short and impractical. The RCUH suggests a period of not less than 12-months of employment.
2. Section 2. (5) – Delete this entire section of text. The RCUH utilizes the services of the State Attorney General's Office as its legal counsel. There will be no “employment contracts”. Replace wording with: “These employees will be subject to the Research Corporation of the University of Hawaii's (RCUH) policies and procedures relating to employment; except for any applicable Unemployment Insurance coverage which will be the responsibility of the State of Hawaii. In addition, all procurement actions related to this program will be subject to the applicable RCUH policies.”
3. Remove Section 4.

Thank you for considering our testimony in support of S. B. 713 SD2, with changes.



Nelson M. Sakamoto
Director of Human Resources



Testimony of The Nature Conservancy of Hawai'i
Commenting on S.B. 713 SD2 Making an Appropriation for the Emergency Environmental Workforce
House Committee on Higher Education
Tuesday, March 24, 2009, 2:15pm, Room. 309

The Nature Conservancy recommends amending Section 2 of S.B. 713, SD2 as follows:

SECTION 2. There is established the emergency environmental workforce program to be attached to [~~The Research Corporation~~] the research corporation of the University of Hawaii for administrative purposes.

The emergency environmental workforce program shall:

(1) Provide assistance to prevent layoffs in existing environmental programs in Hawaii such as the invasive species committees and watershed partnerships;

(2) Employ, as three-month contract employees, approximately [four hundred to four hundred fifty] _____ individuals who were terminated from their jobs:

(A) [~~after the September 11 tragedy as~~] As a result of [the] significant local economic downturn[. The individuals shall be employed as three-month contract employees,]; or

(B) As a result of acts of war;

(3) Deploy contract employees to all island mayors certifying a need for environmental clearance and eradication services to supplement current services being provided for the isolation of dengue fever, the eradication of the miconia plant and other invasive plants, and the reduction of coqui frog and fire ant populations; and

(4) Coordinate its efforts with the efforts of the invasive species committee on each island.

We recommend that if funding is available for an Emergency Environmental Workforce (EEWF) that a portion of that funding be used to shore up our existing environmental workforce—watershed partnerships and invasive species committees—to prevent job loss and ensure the foundation of support needed to make the new EEWF an environmental and workforce development success. Beyond ensuring a proper foundation for training and supervision, a lesson learned in 2001 with the prior EEWF is that the Legislature must provide reasonable funding for human resources support, safety equipment, tools, vehicles, and other necessities for workers and managers.

The EEWF established by the Legislature after September 11, 2001 produced job opportunities and significant conservation benefit. Many of those workers are still employed in conservation today. However, a foundation of support is needed to ensure the effectiveness of a renewed EEWF today.

The existing conservation programs that will likely be tapped to coordinate and supervise new EEWF workers are facing severe cutbacks. The Island Invasive Species Committees (ISCs) www.hawaiiinvasivespecies.org/iscs/, Watershed Partnerships (WPs) www.hawp.org, and the DLNR Natural Area Reserve System (NARS) and Forest Reserve (FR) programs <http://hawaii.gov/dlnr/dofaw> that took on and managed EEWF personnel in 2001 will experience a reduction of 50-60% in their State funding for Fiscal Year 2010.

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The Nature Conservancy
March 24, 2009
Page 2 of 2

These existing conservation management programs are supported by the DLNR's Natural Area Reserve Fund (NAR Fund). The NAR Fund is a special fund within the DLNR that receives 25% of State conveyance tax revenues. With the down economy and resulting decline in real estate transactions, conveyance tax revenues are severely diminished.

The ISCs and WPs will be laying off significant numbers of professional staff in FY10 and cutting back on the conservation services they provide for the benefit of all island residents. They will not likely be in a position to train and manage new personnel, particularly individuals who have no background in conservation field work. Highly skilled conservation workers would lose their jobs only to be replaced by unskilled labor that would not have sufficient mentoring, training or support to do good work.

The attached documents show the conveyance tax revenue reductions and resulting budget, project and staff cuts anticipated by NAR Fund programs in FY2010.

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Attachments

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PROGRAM	OBJECTIVE	TOTAL # OF STAFF	STAFF SUPPORTED BY STATE FUNDS	RESULTS OF ANTICIPATED 60% REDUCTION IN STATE FUNDS IN FY10
WATERSHED PARTNERSHIPS	The Hawaii Association of Watershed Partnerships (HAWP) is comprised of nine Watershed Partnerships on six islands. Watershed Partnerships are voluntary alliances of landowners and other partners working collaboratively to protect more than 1 million acres of forested watersheds for water recharge, conservation, and other ecosystem services.	67	43	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Layoff 24 Staff • Reduced weed/ungulate control activity • Only maintain current fences • Gains of prior years severely eroded • Loss of species, habitat and water recharge capacity • Increased exposure to fire • Decreased outreach • Increased cost to repair environmental degradation downstream and on reefs
NATURAL AREA PARTNERSHIP PROGRAM	The Natural Area Partnership Program was established in 1991 to provide state funds on a two-for-one basis with private funds for the management of private lands that are dedicated to conservation. With over 30,000 acres enrolled, this innovative program complements the protection efforts on state lands - a partnership essential for the success of conservation in Hawai'i.	28	19	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Layoff 11 staff • Reduce forest management activity by 60% • Lose investment in staff training and expertise • Increased future costs to control identified invasive species • Feral pig damage will increase significantly causing degradation to native ecosystems, rare plants and watershed • Invasive weeds will significantly displace native ecosystems • Lose ground gained by removing ungulates from newly fenced area
NATURAL AREA RESERVES SYSTEM	The Natural Area Reserves System (NARS) was established in 1970 to preserve in perpetuity Hawaii's most unique ecosystems. There are currently 19 reserves on five islands, encompassing more than 109,000 acres. The diverse areas found in the NARS range from marine and coastal environments to lava flows, tropical rainforests, and an alpine desert. The reserves also protect major watershed areas, which are vital sources of fresh water.	39	39	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Layoff 8-13 staff • No ability to conduct necessary archaeological/cultural surveys or design services necessary for effective management of resources within the NARS • Reduced ability to maintain existing fences and special mgmt units, control priority weeds/ungulates, or outplant rare plants • Significantly reduced ability to coordinate volunteers and outreach • Reduced support/funding for educational/outreach programs • No ability to provide consistent presence and reduced ability to accomplish management priorities at ORMP areas: Kaena Point NAR and Ahihi Kinau NAR • Reduced ability to maintain and repair infrastructure such as fences, trails, roads, boardwalks, helipads, and management shelters.
YOUTH CONSERVATION CORPS	The Youth Conservation Corps (YCC) is a hands-on summer learning experience aimed at educating Hawaii's youth on the many conservation issues that threaten Hawaii's unique environment. Students are mentored by and work alongside some of Hawaii's premiere conservation leaders. Nearly 170 local youth participated in the 2008 summer program.	8	4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Layoff 2 staff • Summer program will be reduced from 120 students to 58 • Summer program leaders will remain at 24 as they are funded by federal dollars, but for half of the managers, duties will change from mentoring youth to working as an intern for 7 weeks • Natural resources will suffer from less human assistance to mitigate for ungulates, invasives and other impacts

PROGRAM	OBJECTIVE	TOTAL # OF STAFF	STAFF SUPPORTED BY STATE FUNDS	RESULTS OF ANTICIPATED 60% REDUCTION IN STATE FUNDS IN FY10
FORESTRY/ FOREST STEWARDSHIP PROGRAM	<p>The Forest Stewardship Program (FSP), administered by the Department of Land and Natural Resources, Division of Forestry and Wildlife (DLNR-DOFAW), provides technical and financial assistance to owners of nonindustrial private forest land that are interested in conservation, restoration, and/or timber production.</p> <p>The Forestry Program manages 55 forest reserves comprising more than 640,000 acres, or 16% of Hawaii's land area. The program also provides financial incentives to agricultural landowners to convert fallow or open land to trees, shrubs, and forest habitat, conducts control and monitoring efforts in each county for existing and incipient invasive species, and coordinates T&E species management.</p>	17	12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Layoff 4-6 staff • Limited ability to maintain existing fences and special management units, control priority weeds, or control ungulates • Decreased ability to mitigate known threats to federally endangered species, interruption of restoration and data collection projects • No new FSP projects. Two projects in development to be placed on hold • Limited ability to continue multi-year fence construction projects • Unmitigated degradation of existing road, trail and fencing infrastructure • Possible loss of federal funds due to lack of matching, including loss of up to 2.5 FTE state funded staff supporting these projects; more positions may be lost if federal grants are lost due to lack of funding • Erosion of existing rare plant restoration/ research projects, further loss of Hawaii's natural heritage due to extinction
INVASIVE SPECIES COMMITTEES	<p>The Invasive Species Committees (ISCs) are island-based partnerships of government agencies, NGOs, and private businesses working to protect each island from the most threatening invasive pests. The ISCs address the need for rapid response and control work on new invasive pests that have the ability to severely impact our economy, ecosystem, watersheds, human health, and quality of life. A driving objective of the ISCs is to control the most threatening pests while populations are still relatively small and it is economically feasible to control or eliminate them.</p>	64	29	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Layoff 19 staff • Increased future costs to control identified invasive species (e.g., estimated cost impacts from delaying miconia work on Maui range from \$22M-\$34M) • Inability to respond to new coqui reports resulting in island-wide infestations • Inability to assist with HDOA nursery surveys to prevent spread of Little Fire Ant, nettle caterpillars, and coqui frogs
HAWAII INVASIVE SPECIES COUNCIL	<p>The Hawaii Invasive Species Council (HISC) was established to provide policy level direction, coordination, and planning among state departments, federal agencies, and international and local initiatives for the control and eradication of harmful invasive species infestations throughout the State, and to prevent the introduction of other invasive species that may be potentially harmful.</p>	35	35	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Layoff 13 staff • Cease operation of SuperSucker, and lose 5-year investment in technology/research • Reduced capacity to conduct risk assessments for new plants • Lose ballast water management data collection • Reduced ability to conduct vessel hull inspections • Reduced capacity to respond to new pest incursions • Reduced community outreach • 50% reduction in West Nile Virus sample collection (mosquito traps, dead birds, bird sera), testing and detection

Programs Supported by the DLNR Natural Area Reserve Fund	FY09 State Funding	FY10 Expected 60% Reduction in State Funds	Staff Funded with State Funds	Expected Layoffs
HAWAII ASSOCIATION OF WATERSHED PARTNERSHIPS				
Kauai Watershed Alliance	\$294,190	\$117,676	5	5
Koolau Mountains Watershed Partnership	\$227,514	\$91,006	6	3
East Molokai Watershed Partnership	\$124,740	\$49,896	8	1
Lanai Forest & Watershed Partnership	\$75,000	\$30,000	0.5	0
W. Maui Mountains Watershed Partnership	\$217,500	\$87,000	5	4
E. Maui Watershed Partnership	\$441,900	\$176,760	5	4
Leeward Haleakala Watershed Restoration Partnership	\$343,830	\$137,532	6	4
Kohala Watershed Partnership	\$235,500	\$94,200	2	0
Three Mountain Alliance	\$448,320	\$179,328	6	3
HAWP Subtotal	\$2,408,494	\$963,398	43.5	24
NATURAL AREA PARTNERSHIP PROGRAM				
Waikamoi Preserve	\$220,000	\$88,000	4.5	4
Kapunakea Preserve	\$125,000	\$50,000	2.5	2.5
Kanepuu Preserve	\$16,667	\$6,667	0.5	0.5
Kamakou Preserve	\$218,737	\$87,495	3	0
Pelekunu Preserve	\$96,289	\$38,516	0.5	0.5
Moomomi Preserve	\$52,455	\$20,982	0.5	0
Kau Preserve	\$119,910	\$47,964	2.5	1
Puu Kukui Preserve	\$281,216	\$112,486	5	3
NAPP Subtotal	\$1,130,274	\$452,110	19	11.5
NATURAL AREA RESERVES SYSTEM				
Hawaii Island NARS			12	5
Maui Nui NARS			12	6
Oahu NARS	\$4,590,000	\$1,836,000	7	1
Kauai NARS			3	0
Statewide Administration			5	1
NARS Subtotal	\$4,590,000	\$1,836,000	39	13
YOUTH CONSERVATION CORP	\$474,588	\$189,835	4	2
FORESTRY / FOREST STEWARDSHIP				
Forest Stewardship	\$453,516	\$181,406	0.5	0
Watershed Management in Forest Reserves	\$1,000,000	\$400,000	1	0
Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program	\$300,000	\$120,000	1	0
DLNR Invasive Species Program Operations	\$244,898	\$97,959	4	0
T&E Species Management	\$400,000	\$160,000	5.5	5.5
FORESTRY / FS Subtotal	\$2,398,414	\$959,366	12	5.5
INVASIVE SPECIES COMMITTEE				
Big Island Invasive Species Committee (BIISC)	\$375,094	\$150,038	9	5
Kauai Invasive Species Committee (KISC)	\$374,249	\$149,700	6	4
Maui Invasive Species Committee (MISC)	\$430,700	\$172,280	7	4
Oahu Invasive Species Committee (OISC)	\$437,200	\$174,880	7	6
ISCs Subtotal	\$1,617,243	\$646,897	29	19
HAWAII INVASIVE SPECIES COUNCIL				
AIS / Hull Fouling	\$579,800	\$231,920	11.5	4.5
DOA / USDA	\$129,200	\$51,680	3	3
Bishop Museum	\$160,000	\$64,000	1	1
Invasive Species Research Grants	\$330,000	\$132,000	10	0
HISC Support	\$135,000	\$54,000	1.5	0.5
Weed Risk Assessment	\$97,700	\$39,080	2	1
Invasive Species Outreach	\$97,700	\$39,080	4	1
West Nile Virus Detection & Suppression	\$307,300	\$122,920	2	2
HISC Subtotal	\$1,836,700	\$734,680	35	13
GRAND TOTAL	\$14,455,713	\$5,782,285	182	88

CONVEYANCE TAX TRANSFERS FOR FY 2009

Month	Total Monthly Conveyance Tax Collections to General Fund - 100%	DLNR S-09-342-C NARS Trf In - 25%	DLNR S-09-317-C Land Conservation Trf In - 10%	HCDCH T-09-930-B Rental Housing Trust Trf In - 30%	TAXATION G-00-000-C General Fund Balance Remaining - 35%
July	\$2,192,465.87	\$548,116.47	\$219,246.59	\$657,739.76	\$767,363.05
August	\$1,774,945.34	\$443,736.34	\$177,494.53	\$532,483.60	\$621,230.87
September	\$2,514,102.90	\$628,525.73	\$251,410.29	\$754,230.87	\$879,936.01
October	\$1,825,468.79	\$456,367.20	\$182,546.88	\$547,640.64	\$638,914.07
November	\$1,233,090.89	\$308,272.72	\$123,309.09	\$369,927.27	\$431,581.81
December	\$2,074,566.26	\$518,641.57	\$207,456.63	\$622,369.88	\$726,098.18
January	\$1,738,521.89	\$434,630.47	\$173,852.19	\$521,556.57	\$608,482.66
February					\$0.00
March					\$0.00
April					\$0.00
May					\$0.00
June					\$0.00
Grand Totals	\$13,353,161.94	\$3,338,290.50	\$1,335,316.20	\$4,005,948.59	\$4,673,606.65

TOTAL CONVEYANCE TAX COLLECTIONS	
FY08	\$ 38,408,022
FY07	\$ 48,328,508
FY06	\$ 56,646,115
FY05	\$ 24,318,038
FY04	\$ 18,432,214

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CONVEYANCE TAX COLLECTIONS & TRANSFERS FOR FY 2008

Month	Total Monthly Conveyance Tax Collections to General Fund - 100%	DLNR S-08-342-C NARS Trf In - 25%	DLNR S-08-317-C Land Conservation Trf In - 10%	HCDCH T-08-930-B Rental Housing Trust Trf In - 50%	TAXATION G-00-000-C General Fund Balance Remaining - 15%
July	\$2,213,212.44	\$553,303.11	\$221,321.25	\$1,106,606.22	\$331,981.86
August	\$3,025,234.70	\$756,308.68	\$302,523.47	\$1,512,617.35	\$453,785.20
September	\$4,492,022.48	\$1,123,005.62	\$449,202.25	\$2,246,011.24	\$673,803.37
October	\$3,573,776.52	\$893,444.13	\$357,377.65	\$1,786,888.26	\$536,066.48
November	\$2,959,259.75	\$739,814.94	\$295,925.98	\$1,479,629.88	\$443,888.95
December	\$3,079,131.57	\$769,782.89	\$307,913.16	\$1,539,565.79	\$461,869.73
January	\$3,478,274.45	\$869,568.61	\$347,827.45	\$1,739,137.23	\$521,741.16
February	\$1,871,282.33	\$467,820.58	\$187,128.23	\$935,641.17	\$280,692.35
March	\$2,952,992.29	\$738,248.07	\$295,299.23	\$1,476,496.15	\$442,948.84
April	\$4,051,020.17	\$1,012,755.04	\$405,102.02	\$2,025,510.09	\$607,653.02
May	\$2,860,587.29	\$715,146.82	\$286,058.73	\$1,430,293.65	\$429,088.09
June	\$3,851,227.53	\$962,806.88	\$385,122.75	\$1,925,613.77	\$577,684.13
Grand Totals	\$38,408,021.52	\$9,602,005.38	\$3,840,802.17	\$19,204,010.79	\$5,761,203.18

TOTAL CONVEYANCE TAX COLLECTIONS

FY07	\$48,328,508
FY06	\$56,646,115
FY05	\$24,318,038
FY04	\$18,432,214

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